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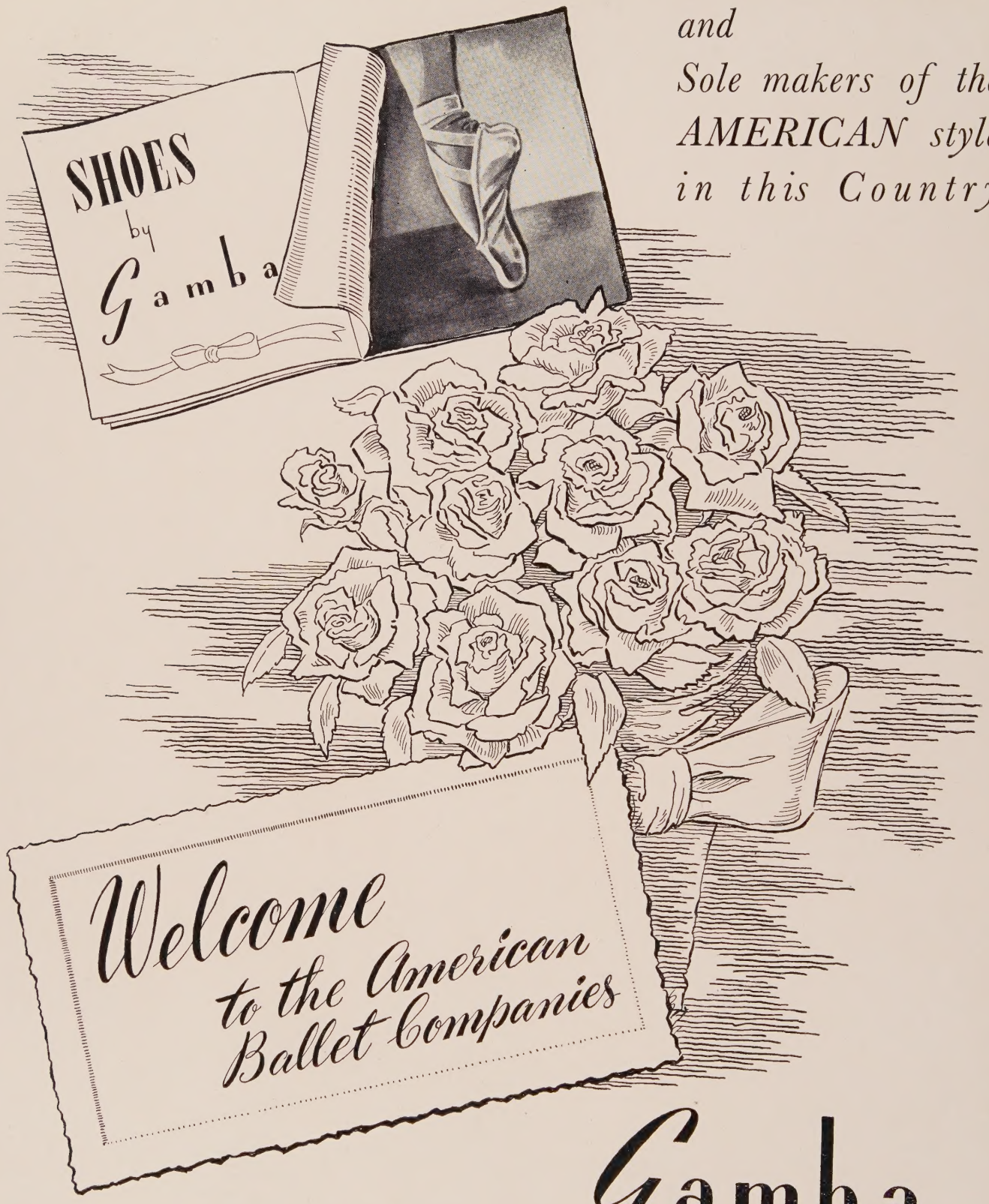

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Dance and Dancers

Editor: PETER WILLIAMS

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MERSEY HOUSE, 132-4, FLEET STREET, LONDON, E.C.4.

SINCE this paper started eight months ago, I find that my life has been considerably enlivened by the letters I receive from readers who say what they think. The majority are charming bouquets though a number have thistles concealed therein; a few, of course, are honest-to-goodness stinging-nettles. As most people only put pen to paper when they have something unpleasant to say, I find it most heartening to think that there are those left in the world who can still make the effort to say nice things and then put a twopenny-halfpenny stamp on them at the end.

Among the mixed bouquets, I am frequently finding this phrase, "I do hope that you are not going to become a big popular magazine." One gets the impression that the writer, and on occasions the speaker, is burning with resentment at such a probability.

There has always been a small limited circle of people who resent anything becoming popular, they feel that as soon as an art becomes available and understood by the masses it automatically becomes very bad. Often have I heard concerts sniffed at because they were said to be too popular, regardless of the fact that the programmes consisted of the symphonies of Brahms, Beethoven and Tchaikovsky. It seems extraordinary to think that these composers should be dubbed "second-rate" just because they happened to write music that everyone can understand.

The same thing applies to ballet. When I first knew ballet it was a very specialised dish for the discerning few. To the vast majority of people the word Ballet meant "frilly skirts and toe-dancing" and the only single name with any drawing power was Pavlova. During World War 2, ballet became available to a vast new public which has continued to increase year by year, until it has reached almost football proportions.

As the clamour increases the small select circle continue to day-dream beneath Diaghilev's deodar and bathe in the backwash of De Basil, they are reluctant to leave their Venusberg. One cannot blame them because those were great days, but then the past was always better than the present and has been so since the dawn of time. Today is a real thing and times have changed and although I was brought up in a very different school I have every intention of meeting that change. I shall continue to present the dance and those who dance in as clear a manner as possible, I shall persist in my efforts to embrace every country in the world where the dance is held in respect, and try to create a better understanding. Whether these are the ingredients for a big popular magazine I just do not know but I sincerely hope that it may do something to stop such incidents as the arrival of a gentleman in Copenhagen (announced as the greatest English Dance critic), who expressed amazement at the fact that there was a Ballet Festival for "he had never heard that they had ballet in Denmark."

★

A number of people are unclear as to the difference between Ballet and Dancing—one is a combined art the other is the art of movement. It was possibly this uncertainty that led to all the fuss, from certain quarters, about the Fonteyn-Helpmann concert tour (or Fonteyn Follies as they are affectionately called). As I was away I missed the beginning of the tour but was lucky enough to get to the last performance at Brighton.

It is always a pleasure to me to visit this raffish bit of London-by-Sea. The Regency atmosphere persists and the presence of that pseudo-oriental divinity, The Pavilion, gives a feeling of unreality quite different to any other seaside resort. The fact that I saw more of Fonteyn's dancing than I am ever likely to see at Covent Garden made it all doubly worthwhile.

The presentation of concert performances is an art all of its own and Markova and Dolin have perfected it but they have had many years in which to do it. The Fonteyn Follies only had ten performances, and rather spasmodic at that, so they could not be expected to reach such a high standard in so short a time. The very large audience paid willingly to see her dance the *Aurora pas de deux*, *L'Ile des Sirenes*, a Variation from Ashton's *Les Rendezvous*, the *grand pas de deux* from *Casse Noisette*, and a great deal of *Coppelia*. As so much has been said about all these things except *Ile des Sirenes* (to be dealt with in full in our next issue) I will only say that she danced in the way that we have now come to expect from her and 1,500 people, who probably could never get to Covent Garden, went away completely satisfied and richer for the experience. Popularity is not such a bad thing after all.

Cover Story

This month's cover was taken by the American photographer Arnold Eagle. It is from a work by Martha Graham called *Dark Meadow* with sets by Isamu Noguchi and a score by Carlos Chavez.

Standing in the photograph are May O'Donnell (She of the ground), Erick Hawkins (He who summons) and in the foreground Martha Graham (One who seeks).

MARTHA GRAHAM, America's foremost exponent of the Modern Dance, was born in Pennsylvania, a tenth generation American. Her dance training began in 1916 at the Denishawn School in Los Angeles and within three years she was leading dancer in the Denishawn company. Leaving there in 1923 she appeared briefly as a solo dancer in a revue but dissatisfied with that she took up a teaching position at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester. The year 1926 marked the beginning of her creative period, since when she has created more than one hundred works. Among her best-known are—*Letter to the World*, *Every Soul is a Circus*, *Punch and the Judy*, *Cave of the Heart*, *Dark Meadow*, *Herodiade*, *Salem Shore* and *Appalachian Spring*. She has also appeared in a special performance of Massine's *Le Sacre du Printemps*, with Leopold Stokovski conducting the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra.

MAY O'DONNELL, a native of California, made her début as a dancer with the Estelle Reed Concert Group of San Francisco. She was soloist in Graham's company from 1932 to 1938 and then again in 1944. Her activities outside the company included the formation of the San Francisco Dance Theatre in 1939, a tour with José Limon in 1941 and teaching summer courses at both Bennington College (1932-38) and The University of California (1938-45). She has created roles in *Appalachian Spring*, *Herodiade*, *Dark Meadow* and *Cave of the Heart*. When not performing with the Graham company she teaches at the Art Workshop and Shurr-O'Donnell Dance Studio in New York.

ERICK HAWKINS, Graham's husband and leading dancer, was born in Trinidad, Colorado. Originally trained as a ballet dancer at the School of American Ballet in New York, he was subsequently a member of the American Ballet (1934-37) and Ballet Caravan (1936-39) both companies emanating from the school. In 1938 he joined Martha Graham and has remained with the company up to the present. He has taught at the School of American Ballet and Bennington School of the Dance. Among the works he has created are: *Show Piece* (Ballet Caravan, 1937), *Liberty Tree*, *Yankee Bluebritches*, *Curtain Raiser*, *John Brown* and *Stephen Acrobat*, the latter is in the Graham repertoire.

Contributors

CARYL BRAHMS needs no introduction to our readers. She answers her critics on page 16.

ALMA HUBNER who lives in Paris, has contributed before to *Dance and Dancers* when she wrote about Katherine Dunham's school in Paris. This month she writes about Serge Lifar, his background and his more important recent creations (pages 10 and 11).

BAIRD HASTINGS, the American critic working in Paris who was responsible for bringing the Bérard exhibition to this country, has written for us on several occasions. This month he interviews Martha Graham (page 8) who is now appearing at the Piccadilly Theatre.

EVAN SENIOR, our music critic, writes about the music of Igor Stravinsky which is one of the features of the current season of New York City Ballet at Covent Garden (page 15); also about the ballet music to be heard at the Promenade Concerts at the Albert Hall.

TATLOCK MILLER contributes an article on the South African dancer at Sadler's Wells, Alfred Rodrigues, who has choreographed three ballets for the Fonteyn-Helpmann tour with great success (page 9).

Next month

Full-colour cover of Gene Kelly in *Summer Stock*

THE AMERICAN INVASION. Photographs and opinions on the New York City Ballet and Martha Graham Company

ALEXANDER GRANT

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Nora Kaye and Igor Youskevitch in Jeux (*Photo : Eileen Darby*)

The Royal Theatre, Copenhagen

COPENHAGEN

The Royal Danish Ballet I.

by Peter Williams

PAST and present are closely intermingled in Copenhagen, so cosily do five or six hundred year old buildings settle down with those of a few years standing, that one gets the impression of being in a no man's land in time. It is as well to remember this when considering the Danish Ballet.

It was a good idea for the Royal Theatre to give a short summer season of ballet so that tourists could see the treasure that has been hidden from the rest of the world for so long. Ballet is usually given two or three times a week from the autumn to spring and during these months not many visitors come to Copenhagen. I am exceedingly grateful to the various good friends and organisations for making my visit possible.

The Royal Theatre stands in Kongens Nytorv (King's New Square). The present building was built in 1874 beside the original Royal Theatre of 1748. It is a typical piece of European "Opera House" architecture but has an atmosphere all of its own. Although the auditorium is not large (it holds about 1,500), the stage is bigger than Covent Garden and well equipped at that.

Ballet has flourished in Denmark for four centuries but it was Copenhagen-born August Bournonville who raised it to the high level that it retains today. After having trained with Auguste Vestris and danced with great success at the Paris Opera, he returned to Copenhagen in 1829 where he remained, except for a few brief excursions abroad, until his death forty years later. He was principal dancer, *maître de ballet* and choreographer, creating over fifty ballets many of which are still given to this day.

Apart from his remarkable invention, one of the most extraordinary things are the dances he made for the male dancer. In the middle of the last century the male dancer was almost completely ignored in every other European country; the great Romantic revival was concerned only with the ballerina, the poor male was relegated to the role of *porteur*; just somebody who could lift and support the ballerina when necessary but with little chance to shine in a solo. This state of affairs continued until Diaghilev brought his company to Western Europe in the beginning of this century. But in Denmark it was very different, the *premier danseur* was equally as important as the ballerina; the boys in the *corps de ballet* had as much, if not more, to do than the girls.

The opening ballet on the first night of the Festival was *Le Conservatoire*. This is a fragment of a full-length work based on incidents in Bournonville's life with the Opera in Paris. Only the dancing-school scene has been retained with all vestige of plot eliminated. This ballet-class is ideal for showing the uninitiated the pure French style which Bournonville brought to Denmark, and which must be the only country where it survives though it is now known as Bournonville style. Unless you are prepared for it, it comes as a shock. It is soft, sweet and rounded and the bent knee takes a lot of getting used to. All so different to the hard brilliance of the Russian school which now permeates everything. I really feel that these old ballets are unexportable, they are such tender flowers completely right in the Copenhagen hot-house but throw them to the lions of Covent Garden or the Metropolitan Opera House and everything would disappear and they might just appear rather "corny".

The first evening finished with the three acts of Bournonville's most famous ballet—*Napoli*. Almost every child in Denmark is brought up on this work and it is so much a tradition that to criticise it in any way is almost sacrilege. It is a simple tale of a Neopolitan fisher boy who loves a girl, Teresina. He takes her out in a boat, a storm springs up, and she is washed overboard. On his return he is, rather naturally, cursed by her mother for being so careless. Armed with a picture of the Madonna, he goes

The finale of Napoli *when Gennaro, Teresina and her mother go off in a cart drawn by youths. In this photograph Margot Lander is seen as Teresina, this great ballerina retired early this year*

STORY

off to look for her in the Blue Grotto. She in the meantime has been turned into naiad by the King of the sea sprites. When Gennaro, for that is the fisherman's name, arrives to take her home he meets with a certain amount of opposition. However, the picture of the Madonna overcomes everything and she turns back to her mortal shape; the two lovers return to Naples with a boatload of rich but useless gifts which the other sea sprites and naiads bestowed on them.

Frankly, as it stands today, this three-act work has many weaknesses. The story is never strong enough to hold it together. The first act, though beautiful to look at with its view of the bay and Vesuvius smoking in the background, is overloaded with mime and contains little dancing. Nor are the principal characters clearly defined. So used are we to lover's emotions being expressed in a *grand pas de deux* that it is hard to believe in balletic love without such a motive union. On the other hand there are a number of beautifully drawn characters particularly the street-singer, Pascarillo (traditionally mimed by Aage Eibye).

The second act has the best Romantic cave décor that I have ever seen but otherwise there is little to recommend it as there is very little dancing. It has obviously been very severely cut and I understand that it used to be known as the "Bronnum Act" on account of its great length. So boring was it that most of the audience went and congregated in the Bronnum bar (a café near the theatre) until it was over. However, I cannot help feeling that it must have had a great deal more to it than now remains. The great feature of this act is the wonderful way in which the various stage tricks work—the well-manipulated change of Teresina to a naiad and back again into a mortal. And also the way in which Gennaro's boat is managed; you really get the feeling that he is paddling in water. All of it a great lesson to English people so used to the simple mechanism of the swans in *Lac des Cygnes* being badly bungled.

The final act makes up for all the shortcomings of the previous ones. Starting off with a long *pas de six* with a number of lovely variations, it concludes with a long and very gay *tarantella* with many variations that are so lively and full of invention that every choreographer should make an effort to see it. It is impossible to describe the extraordinary vitality of it all which almost drags you out of your seat. This act alone is worth making the trip from London to Copenhagen.

The only other Bournonville work to be given during the Festival was *La Sylphide*. In England we are familiar with Filippo Taglioni's version of this sylph-smitten Scotsman story, which was reconstructed for Les Ballets des Champs-Elysées by Victor Gsovsky. In the Danish version, created four years after the original Paris production in 1832, the charming Schneitzhoeffer music has been replaced by that of Lovenskjold and not for the better. In almost every other respect the ballet is superior as it is a more complete work though I missed the lovely *pas de trois* for James, Effie and La Sylphide in act one, and the *pas de deux* with the scarf in act two.

The first act contains some very interesting *ensembles* for the *corps de ballet* based on traditional Highland dances together with a number of exciting male variations. All the scenes with Madge, the witch, are made really convincing and frightening on account of the remarkable mime of Gerda Karstens.

I found it rather difficult not to think of Nina Vyroubova in the title role. When she danced this with the Champs-Elysées she always struck me as being the embodiment of Taglioni and the Romantic era. Margrethe Schanne, who plays it here, is slighter and lacks the warmth and style of the Russian ballerina. On the other hand she is far nearer the sylph of the story and you never think of her as a ballerina in a role, but as the supernatural creature herself. You can really believe in her flitting from tree to flower. Her unearthly quality makes you forget you are in a theatre.

Both the dancing and mime of Poul Gnatt's James were quite excellent. As an artist he has gained stature since his last appearance in England with Metropolitan Ballet and if he continues to improve at the rate he is doing now he should, in a few years, be one of the outstanding male dancers of this generation. His variation in the second act was one of the best passages of male dancing that I have seen in years.

The production was all that one would expect from a theatre with a great tradition and the sensitive lighting gave the perfect romantic atmosphere. The final apotheosis with the dead sylphide lying back on draperies, and guarded by attendant sylphs, drifting across the sky, was beautifully managed and might have been a Chalon lithograph.

Even earlier than Bournonville was Vincenzo Galeotti, an Italian who came to Copenhagen in 1773 where he remained for forty-one years. He was responsible for creating the company and repertoire that Bournonville inherited. His only surviving work *Les Caprices de L'Amour et du Maitre de Ballet*, is the oldest work in any European repertoire. Far from being a museum curiosity, this little work is a gem that would be successful anywhere today. Its construction is original. The story is of seven couples from various parts of the world together with six negroes, who go to Cupid's, temple to be married. But Cupid is in a perverse mood and decides to marry them off to the wrong people with very amusing results. This all gives an opportunity for a number of witty character *pas de deux*.

This month I have purposely kept to the early ballets that have made the Danish tradition. Next month I shall talk about the works that have been created in this century.

Above. Gerda Karstens as Madge, the witch, in La Sylphide. *She it is who destroys the happiness of James by concocting a poison scarf which causes La Sylphide's wings to drop off and thus killing her. Below are Poul Gnatt and Margrethe Schanne in the principal roles*

(*All photos by Mydskov of Copenhagen*)

More about Graham

from Agnes de Mille and Baird Hastings

Martha Graham as Jocasta and Erick Hawkins as Oedipus in Night Journey

To most people in Europe Martha Graham has, for many years, been a legend. Now she is here at the Piccadilly Theatre and it is possible for us to see for ourselves this dancer who has cut across all tradition. What is it that she has done to contribute so much to the history of the dance? Famous American choreographer, AGNES DE MILLE, gives an explanation :

"IN ballet movement, the arms and legs are used as separate revolving members on a steady spine. Ballet is mainly a series of poses linked with flowing movement which strives always to conceal effort. Graham's approach was in thinking of dancing as movement. True, this was the essence of the von Laban-Wigman Central European school but Graham had never seen them.

Graham thought that effort was important since, in fact, effort is life; the use of the ground was vital rather than the escape from it. Because effort starts with the nerve centres, it follows that a technique developed from the impulses that flow through the body and down the length of the arms and legs would have enormous nervous vitality, like the motion sent through a whip. These impulses she calls "contractions." She also evolved suspensions and falls which use the thigh and knee as a hinge on which to raise and lower the body to the floor, thus incorporating for the first time, the ground into gesture proper.

Graham's innovations constitute probably the greatest addition to the dance vocabulary of this century.

Recently, BAIRD HASTINGS had the opportunity to ask Graham a number of questions:—

What has been the single greatest influence in your life?

It was Mrs. Byrd, my high school English teacher. She told me I had to do something for people. This gave me a realisation of the inner force which I had. And when I saw Ruth St. Denis dance I knew what direction my life had to take. Also my nurse was very important to me, for she made up plays, in which I acted. Both Mrs. Byrd and my nurse died in 1948.

What do you consider your greatest work?

Perhaps the most rounded theatre piece is *Letter to the World*, but when it comes to movement alone I prefer *Dark Meadow* and *Night Journey*.

What do you consider the importance of your work?

At first I was revolutionary, and I had to work that out, but now people should catch up with me, at least the earlier works, and they should understand, or feel. These are two different levels. Take Sir Laurence Olivier's *Hamlet* for instance. Olivier says Hamlet is a man who could not make up his mind, and immediately the audience relaxes. Thus Olivier has won his audience on one level, and if they actually follow the intricacies he will win them on another.

I am sorry if I am still obscure, for I do want to be understood, even if I never do have a wide audience. However I cannot dilute my work, either as I present it, or by putting it into a musical. In fact part of my usefulness consists in shocking. You know there are many persons who don't like my work but keep coming back.

For my dance I seek to express Life in a moment of evolution—a human being in crisis, at the crossroads: Jocasta, Medea, Emily. The story is not particularly important, but the crossroad is. I recall the shock I had when I danced in *Sacre du Printemps*. I would like to do it again, for there is something real, deeply Russian in this important work. It had universality, and it did something for me.

Above all I try to be honest with myself, as I think Picasso and Mallarmé are. I try never to feed on success. There is nothing eternal but change. I must explore new possibilities of movement. While the world wants comfort, all I want is someone to pay the rent and the pianist, and liberty to create, and teach.

How do you prepare your works?

Once the inspiration comes I must get in mental condition to prepare a new work. The basic sets and costumes, which I think out, or work on with Noguchi, who is my favourite designer. Then I begin with the dancers and the music. I never calculate in advance. On occasion I have composed the dance before the music, and in a sense I still do this, but usually the rhythms have already been determined when I start work. The actual sets come only after Noguchi has shown me a model, and he has seen several rehearsals. In *Night Journey* we use a bed made of Male and Female symbols. The *Deaths and Entrances* dress I wear was suggested by an evening dress, and I couldn't establish this character until I had a rehearsal dress made in the same form, though not the same material, as the costume I was going to wear. To rehearse properly the character and the costume must become one being.

Graham's company as Daughters of the Night from Night Journey. *Music by William Schuman and costumes by Isamu Noguchi*

RODRIGUES

new choreographer for Fonteyn

by

Tatlock Miller

LYING flat on his stomach on the sidewalk, staring through an iron grating let into the hot pavement, a little boy of twelve called Rodrigues watched a miracle happen. Transfixed, he saw devils, fairies, queens, clowns, princes and princesses hurrying along a passageway below him. There were spangles. There were swords. There was tinsel. Women wore great gilded breast-plates. Soldier's helmets were tall with plumes. And up through the grating was wafted the pungent, unforgetable smell of grease paint; the grill looked down into a corridor leading from the dressing-rooms to the stage of a theatre in Cape Town. From that moment, he knew he must somehow belong to that magic world.

From that first experience now comes two small ballets and a divertissement, commissioned by Margot Fonteyn and Robert Helpmann for their recent successful tour with other members of Sadler's Wells. And now Rodrigues is a name which, in the opinion of many of those who have seen his *L'isle des Sirenes* (to music of Debussy, with costumes by Loudon Sainthill) will become far more widely known in the near future.

This ballet, his *Concertino Romantico* (music of Weber, costumes by William Chappell); and his smaller-scaled *Pavane*, to Ravel, all show him to be a young choreographer with an intuitive sense of theatre. He creates with a broad, generous, and rhythmic hand. Not only he but we, too, must be grateful to Fonteyn and Helpmann for giving him his first chance. Choreographic talent is rare indeed and it would seem must stifle and suffocate for lack of air in which to breathe and grow.

Now twenty-nine, Rodrigues was born in Cape Town, his father Portuguese, his mother Dutch. Educated at a Marist Brothers College, his first performance was in *As You Like It* when he was fourteen. The same year he enrolled secretly with Mary Holder's Academy of Dramatic Art, his father objecting strongly to any theatrical inclination. Fifteen found him an exuberant Caliban, playing for laughs and ruining the whole performance.

In 1936 the Rene Blum ballet company visited South Africa with Nemtchinova, and the first ballet he saw was Fokine's *L'Epreuve D'Amour*. "I was placid until *Spectre* when suddenly to my horror I discovered that I had stood up and shouted. Something just happened." *Scheherazade* caused a South African rumpus because of the colour bar. Old ladies left the theatre. The Slave, as a compromise, became *café au lait*.

STRANGE RITUAL

Seeing an advertisement in a newspaper asking for male dancers for a new ballet club attached to the Cape Town University, started by Miss Dulcie Howes, he telephoned Miss Howes. "I know nothing about ballet and my feet are big. Does that matter?" he asked. He joined her evening classes, once again surreptitiously because of fear of parental interference. He worked in the day-time on the staff of the *Cape Times*, went to "the strange ritual of a ballet class" every night.

Cecily Robinson, a South African dancer in the de Basil and Woizikovski companies seriously injured her leg on tour in Germany. An experienced dancer, a fervent teacher, she returned home and started a ballet club which developed into a semi-professional company, and worked in conjunction with the Cape Town Orchestra.

He danced in her productions of *Les Sylphides*, *Prince Igor* and *Carnaval*, and finally in the second act of *Swan Lake*, as the Prince. He was seventeen, his newspaper career tottering when he was discovered absorbed in Coward's *Present Indicative* instead of writing an examination paper.

For a production of *Aurora's Wedding* Cecily Robinson was unable to get the music for the Polonaise, asked him to choreograph a Chopin Polonaise in its place, which led to him making his first ballet for her to Saint Saens' *Danse Macabre*, which he followed up with *Le Roi s'amuse* to Handel's *Water Music*.

Simultaneously he worked with Leontine Sagan, played in *Amphitryon* 38 and *Our Betters*. He first made *L'isle des Sirenes* for the South African Ballet Club.

CAPE TO COVENT GARDEN

With the outbreak of war he enlisted in the S.A.A.F. but was rejected, being partially blind in one eye. In the Army he later got his commission as a welfare officer in the Fifth Division and produced his own Army shows in Italy, Egypt and Syria. By the war's end he had given up all idea of being a dancer and was demobilised in London with the purpose of joining R.A.D.A., in 1946.

But one day he went to a class of Madame Volkova. "I could not dance but she was so wonderful a teacher. She made one forget the interrupted years caused by the war. I again enjoyed the conscious discipline of a ballet class which knows none of the self-doubts which haunt an actor in between shows. A dancer keeps his self-respect by going to class and Volkova's class is an experience, an education and an excitement."

On his second day in London he joined the company of *Song of Norway* and danced with them at the Palace for seven months, after which he asked de Valois for an audition, at Covent Garden. After the audition he thought Madame de Valois did not want him. He turned to go. "Boy," she called, "come back." He joined the company and immediately went with them on the exciting European tour of 1947. Since then he has danced such roles as the name-part in *Job*, von Rothbart in *Swan Lake*, the *pas de deux* in *Les Patineurs* and the Squire in *Facade*.

His work as a choreographer was first noticed here for a small ballet called *Les Ingenues*, danced to the Cimarosa oboe concerto, in the open air, gay and light, which he made for the R.A.D. Production Club. On the return from the Company's tour of America he scored another success with his ballet of the Roaring 'Twenties performed at the last Vic Wells Ball at the Dorchester. It was after seeing this that Margot Fonteyn asked him to make a ballet for her and Helpmann's tour.

(*Photo by Gordon Anthony*)

In 1948 Rodrigues married the well-known ballet dancer Julia Farron and they now have an eight-months'-old son.

When I asked him to tell me of his future plans as a choreographer he very rightly said that he could not talk about the things he hopes to do. "I must keep everything bottled up until it has an opportunity of coming out," he said. "You cannot become a choreographer, you must practise, make ballets so that a style can be set. One learns only by doing. The ultimate solution is within oneself."

He feels strongly that in England there is no meeting place for choreographers, artists, dancers and composers. "I feel the tangents of the various arts do not lead to a central point as, for instance, they seem to in France where painters, dramatists, composers and so on meet. We need a small experimental theatre for plays, ballet and even revue."

Rodrigues has always wanted to be a choreographer, more-so since knowing and studying the ballets of Ashton at close quarters as a participant in them. Today he is a young man with the necessary experience, the background, the imagination and spirit to make an important choreographic contribution to contemporary English ballet. We can only hope that others who can will, as Margot Fonteyn and Helpmann have done, make it possible for him to express himself in the dimensions of the theatre to which he belongs and which he first saw lying on his stomach staring through a grating in the ground.

HAVE YOU ORDERED YOUR SEPTEMBER DANCE AND DANCERS?

LIFAR

Tamara Toumanova and Serge Lifar in L'Inconnue. *One of Lifar's recent works which had a book by André Jolivet and décor by Charles Blanc. Created for Toumanova while she was a guest artist at the Opera. Below, a scene from* Septuor *which had music by J. Lutèce and décor by Yves Bonnat (Photos by B. M. Bernard)*

No history of ballet would be complete without a chapter on Serge Lifar. His contribution to ballet as dancer, choreographer, teacher and writer, has yet to be appraised. Lifar has behind him twenty-five years of prolific creative activity on the ballet scene, but little has been said about him. The fact that he has been at the Paris Opera as premier danseur, *choreographer and* maitre de ballet *for over two decades is perhaps the reason why his name is not mentioned, out of France, as often as those of other dancers and choreographers. He prefers to remain at l'Opera, isolated like a monk in his cell, where he performs but once a week and is able to follow from year to year the progress made by his enthusiastic young pupils. The achievements of "la jeunesse", as he calls them, at l'Opera fill him with pride.*

TODAY, at forty-five, he is almost the great dancer he was a quarter of a century ago when he danced, for the first time, the role of Borée in *Zéphyre et Flore*. For twenty-one years at l'Opéra he has experimented, searching for new forms of expression in choreography and putting into practice all his theories on the dance. His famous *Icare*, a ballet which has come to be synonymous with his name, was created to illustrate the theories on the subjection of music to choreography which he published in 1935 in his "Le Manifeste du Chorégraphie".

One is so accustomed to the fact that dancers off the stage are uninteresting as people that Lifar's personality is a revelation. It is absorbing to hear him talk about anything. His magnetic charm causes all eyes to be riveted on him while he does no more than raise an extended arm. One has the impression, through that simplest of gestures, of watching a great dancer, while a few minutes before the *cabrioles* and *entrechats six* of a young man incited merely a yawn.

Aside from his extraordinary knowledge of ballet history (his latest book is a history of ballet in Russia) and of academic technique (he is also the author of a treatise on the technique of academic dancing), Lifar possesses a very broad culture. He is an avid reader and has a profound understanding of Shakespeare, Cervantes and Molière, of Dostoiewsky, Tolstoy and other great Russian writers. Pushkin has moved him more than anyone else, he says that the music of his verses makes him vibrate emotionally with the same intensity as dancing. Lifar is extremely sensitive to all the manifestations of artistic expression, he does not possess the limitation common to most artists who can neither see nor feel beyond their own specialisation. He has travelled extensively in Italy and Spain and is a connoisseur of Italian plastic art. Italian painters such as Giotto and Mantegna have left a vivid impression in his memory.

In all his ballets, Lifar has remained true to his belief that dancing should express a feeling, an idea or a mood. He does not agree with dancing for its own sake. "Every movement should have a meaning," he says. He has a genuine horror of the practice made popular by the ballerinas of the post-Romantic period who, upon their arrival on the stage, would hand "their" music to the conductor and would insert their special solo in the middle of every ballet, with no respect either for choreographer or musician.

In his *loge* at l'Opéra one day, he showed me a yellowish photograph of two ballerinas with a definite *fin de siècle* look about them. Two healthy young matrons on the plump side which he regarded with disgust. One wore a Greek tunic and toe-shoes! The other was dressed as a man! "This was ballet at l'Opéra before Diaghilev came," he said. "I found the situation not much better when I arrived. It seemed incredible to me that the land of the great Vestris could so have forgotten its tradition of male dancing. In all the ballets I have created, even in *Icare*, I have given male dancing a predominant role, at times exceptional. I wanted to restore the male dancer to the prominent place he held before academic ballet relegated him to the shadows."

This is a policy which he has kept up along the years. All of Lifar's first ballets were so predominantly masculine that he entirely neglected the ballerinas, who for once in their lives found themselves dancing second parts. After *Icare*, however, he has brought them back to the foreground but has kept the male dancer's preëminence. A recent example of this was *Septuor*, a ballet with eight principal male parts, a veritable apotheosis of male dancing. Vestris and Perrot, were they living today, would be the first to congratulate Serge Lifar for this achievement.

HIS BACKGROUND

He was the third of four children of a well-to-do family, born on the 2nd April, 1905, at Kiev in the Ukraine. Although christened Serge, his father always called him "Oyama" because of his oriental features. He was six when he first showed signs of his determined character: his brother Vassily, two years his senior, walked down one morning ready to go to school for the first time. Serge immediately decided to go with him. He broke into a fit of crying and did not stop until his parents had consented to send him along with his brother.

Ten years later he displayed equal determination when Bronislava Nijinska wrote on his physical examination sheet "hunchback", declaring him unfit to study ballet. He was determined to become a dancer. This happened in 1921, four years after the Revolution. Lifar visited Nijinska's private studio, while she taught class, and was so impressed that he returned the day after to request his acceptance as her pupil. She refused him and he presumed that it was his Soviet soldier's uniform that had predisposed her against him, so he went to join her class at the state school. When she called him a hunchback he did not waver and

knight-errant of the dance

by ***Alma Hubner***

returned with a medical certificate declaring him physically normal. He joined Nijinska's class but she paid the least possible notice to everything he did in class during the time she taught him. "She did everything to kill the good dispositions I might nourish towards her and to make me detest her; but I also saw in her the divinity holding the mysteries which remained hidden to me. She owned the treasure of knowledge I so wanted to possess," Lifar says.

Nearly a month later Nijinska fled from Russia with her family. Lifar made up his mind to continue studying on his own. He rented a studio with a piano and hired a pianist to work with him. He worked before the mirror every day for five or six hours with unrelenting perseverance. To relax he played Mozart or Chopin on the piano, read Pushkin's verses. At that time he met the comedian Davydoff who taught him mime and stage make-up.

Fifteen months had gone by when a cablegram arrived from Paris: "S. P. Diaghilev needs Nijinska's five best pupils to complete his troupe." Lifar was the first to make plans to reach Paris. How he crossed the Polish border is another story. January 13, 1923, the train from Warsaw brought him into Paris where Diaghilev was waiting.

Lifar rose like a meteor from the *corps de ballet* to the category of first dancer with Diaghilev's company. In seven years' time he made a brilliant career (he partnered Karsavina, Spessivtzeva and Danilova), its details are too well known to need comment here. Those were his formative years, he emerged from them a mature artist. In 1929 Diaghilev died, the company dissolved and Lifar accepted a contract with l'Opéra. Also in '29 he made his début as choreographer with *Le Renard*, to Stravinsky's music and décor by Larionov. Ever since, his prolific work as choreographer has consistently searched for perfection. He considers *Chota Roustavelli* his masterwork. It is a four-act ballet, inspired by a Georgian legend, lasting over three hours. It was created in Monte Carlo, during the years that he, unjustly accused of collaborationism, lived away from l'Opéra, and had not been seen in Paris.

HIS RECENT CREATIONS

Two new ballets by Lifar have met with great success at l'Opéra this year: *Septuor* and *Le Chevalier Errant*.

Septuor, to music by Jean Lutece and Yves Bonnat's décor, is an exceptional ballet in every sense; for its unusual theme of seven men who die in the gallows, for its incredibly "danceable" music and for its dynamic and imaginative choreography. It is also the culmination of Lifar's twenty-one years of labouring to reinstate male dancing at l'Opéra. It is danced almost entirely by men. Another merit of this work is the elimination of the star system. Here all the dancers are stars and everyone is a member of the *corps de ballet*. In *Septuor* Lifar has brought the *corps de ballet* to the fore as never before and has exploited its possibilities to the full.

Le Chevalier Errant is supposed to be very freely inspired in Cervantes' *Don Quixote de la Mancha*.

The décor by the Spanish painter Pedro Flores is more in keeping with the spirit of Cervantes than Jacques Ibert's music, whose barroque choirs are out of place in a story that should remind one of poverty, loneliness and dusty roads. There is a recitative by two actors besides the choirs, Don Quixote's niece and the bachelor Carrasco, who recall, at intervals, the adventures of the knight-errant.

The last act of Le Chevalier Errant *in which comedians arrive in the village and stage a pantomime. The music was by Jacque Ibert and designs by Pedro Flores (Photo: B. M. Bernand)*

The action is divided in two acts and four scenes:

1. Don Quixote (Serge Lifar) is challenged by the windmills, symbolising the machine, attacks them and succumbs. The machine has destroyed the spirit. The shadow of Dulcinea (Micheline Bardin), comes out from a windmill to console Don Quixote.

2. A galley on the high seas. Don Quixote frees the galley slaves. An explosion of merriment breaks out followed by a sudden fit of ingratitude and cruelty. They assault Don Quixote. The only captive who had faith in the Redeemer dies in his arms.

3. The Golden Age. A quiet and luminous landscape. Peasants dance and sing. Don Quixote and Dulcinea (Christiane Vaussard) join them. As night comes, guitarrists play and Don Quixote joins a Spanish dancer (Espanita Cortez).

4. Comedians arrive in the village. They stage a pantomime in which a giant holds a maiden captive (Lysette Darsonval). Don Quixote tries to free her and carries her away; the giant overtakes him and strikes the Knight who totters and falls. The comedians, frightened, withdraw in haste. Don Quixote's death, funeral procession and final apotheosis as the example of kindness, sacrifice and idealism.

The four scenes described above have little connection with each other. Each time the curtain falls Don Quixote and Dulcinea continue dancing in front till it rises again.

This false conception of *Don Quixote* is not Lifar's fault. The writers of the libretto have never come near the true nature and spirit of the work. The third and fourth scenes are a complete misconception. They offer the picture of a gay, colourful Spain, reminder of the gallant times of Goya. It should not be the Spain of castanets, songs and dancing gipsies, but the sad, dramatic Spain of the Middle Ages: peopled by beggars, soldiers without pay, road thieves, knaves, dispossessed hidalgos, maidens in distress for want of a dowry.

The first two scenes of Lifar's ballet are well conceived and could be better if they had the support of the last two. The latter are done in the spirit of *Le Tricorne* and *Capriccio Espagnol*, showing the gay and superficial aspect of Spain which, although it does exist, is not the Castillian Spain of Don Quixote.

The choreography, however, has many brilliant moments. Don Quixote's *pas de deux* with each of the four(!) Dulcineas possess great lyrical beauty. His dances with the spear in the windmill scene are vigorous and enthusiastic, and Lycette Darsonval's spirited *tarantelle* in the last scene leaves one with the impression of having seen something worthwhile.

I am convinced that with such a great theme Lifar could have done something exceptional. He has been the victim, in this case, of inescapable conventions. If not, how explain that four Dulcineas should dance? The size of the company at l'Opéra can be a disadvantage at times. In the fourth scene there were too many dancers on the stage. Jacques Ibert wrote the score in 1946 for Ida Rubinstein and Parisian critics are raving about his great music. This fact has no doubt impeded Lifar from doing an altogether different Don Quixote. How could Lifar possibly create a ballet to his liking on a score completed before the ballet was thought of? Has he forgotten the principles he set down on his "Choreographer's Manifesto" fifteen years ago? I am sure that he has not, that is why I hope we shall some day see a Don Quixote really worthy of both Cervantes and Lifar.

Micheline Bardin and Serge Lifar in the first scene of Le Chevalier Errant. *She is the shadow of Dulcinea who comes out of a windmill to console Don Quixote*

NIMBUS

First given by New York Ballet Theatre at the Center Theatre on Wednesday, May 3, 1950. Choreography by Antony Tudor; Music by Louis Gruenberg; Scenery by Oliver Smith; Costumes by Saul Bolasni.

CAST

The Dreamer	..	.. Nora Kaye
The Dream	..	Diana Adams
The Dream-Beau	..	Hugh Laing

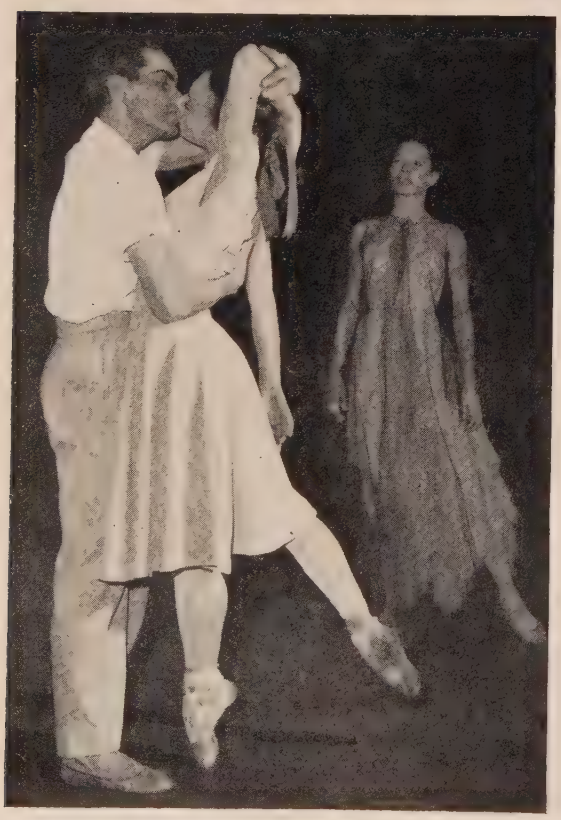
Tudor's latest work is about a working girl who dreams that she is very beautiful and is being made love to by a handsome man. She wakes up on a hot summer night and goes up to the roof to get cool. There she finds the other inhabitants of her block of flats and meets the man she has dreamt about. They flirt and dance and eventually she returns to her room to prepare to go to work.

Nimbus is Tudor's first work in America for over two years, his last was the mighty *Shadow of the Wind* to Mahler's *Song of the Earth*.

The music by Louis Gruenberg is his *Concerto for violin and Orchestra* which was commissioned by Jascha Heifetz and first performed by him with the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra in 1944.

All Photos of New York Ballet Theatre by Eileen Darby

Igor Youskevitch in William Dollar's versi Jeux. *Another photograph from the ballet appears on page five of this issue*



The Dream (top left). The Dreamer (Nora Kaye) asleep dreams that she is dancing with her dream man (Hugh Laing)

Reality (bottom left). On the roof she meets the man of her dreams while her dream-self (Diana Adams) watches

The Dream (right). Her dream-self (Diana Adams) dances a long pas de deux *with her Dream- beau (Hugh Laing)*

JEUX

First given by New York Ballet Theatre at the Center Theatre on Sunday, April, 23, 1950. Choreography by William Dollar; Music by Claude Debussy; Scenery and Costumes by David Ffolkes.

CAST .. Igor Youskevitch, Nora Kaye and Nana Gollner

Diaghilev commissioned the score from Debussy in 1912. Nijinsky created the ballet in 1913. Originally this drama of three tennis players involved with each other during a game of tennis had a certain significance as it was based on certain aspects of Diaghilev's private life. Apart from the music and the fact that the three characters are tennis players, this new version by William Dollar bears no resemblance to the original.

CAPRICHOS

First given by New York Ballet Theatre at the Center Theatre Rockefeller Center on Wednesday, April 5, 1950. Choreography by Herbert Ross; Music by Bela Bartok (His Contrasts for Piano, Clarionet and Violin); Costumes by Helene Pons.

Based on Goya's commentaries on his *Caprichos* etchings, the four episodes are as follows:—

1. Ya Tienen Asiento
   " . . . *These good girls have seats enough and nothing to do with them better than carry them on their heads. . . .*"—
   Charlyne Baker and Jenny Workman
2. No Te Escpaaras
   " . . . *No one ever escapes who wants to be caught . . .*"—Nana Gollner, Eric Braun and Peter Gladke
3. Tantalus
   " . . . *If he were more gallant and less of a bore she would come to life again.*"—
   John Kriza and Ruth Ann Koesun
4. No Hubo Remedio
   " . . . *They were determined to kill this saintly woman. After judgment had been pronounced against her, she is dragged through the streets in triumph. She has indeed deserved a triumph, but if they do it to shame her, they are wasting time. No one can make her ashamed who has nothing to be ashamed of . . .*"—
   Mary Burr, Jack Beaber, Jimmy Hicks, Vernon Lusby, Ralph McWilliams

This work, originally created by Herbert Ross for Choreographer's Workshop in January, was the big hit of Ballet Theatre's New York season. Herbert Ross is now 24, has been dancing in musicals since he was 17. His first essay in choreography was *Sea Chanties*. *Caprichos* is his first major work. The four episodes in this work are unrelated.

The two girls in the first episode who "have seats enough . . .", remain throughout the ballet as a kind of Greek chorus.

The second episode is Spanish and is about a girl who is attacked by two men and wants to be.

(*Above*) *Nana Gollner as the girl in Episode two*

The third episode is a revival of the Apache dance in which an Apache continues to dance with the girl he has murdered.

The final episode shows a Saint being burnt at the stake (there was a photograph of this on page 21 of our July issue).

Bela Bartok's score was originally commissioned by Joseph Szigeti, and completed in 1938.

(*Below*) *Charlyne Baker and Jenny Workman in the first episode of* Caprichos

The ballet in Carousel. *Mavis Ray and Robert Pageant (centre) with Bambi Linn in short dress* (*Photo by Photocraft*

dancing in musicals

1. Carousel

Carousel *was first given at Majestic Theatre, New York, on April* 19, 1945. *It is a musical play based on Ferenc Molnar's* Liliom. *Music by Richard Rodgers, book and lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II, choreography by Agnes de Mille, costumes by Miles White and directed by Reuben Mamoulian.*

It opened at the Drury Lane Theatre, London, on June 7, 1950.

SOMEONE once said: "Comparisons are odious." I should like to add: ". . . . and somewhat pointless." It would be pointless for example to say that Britons are seeing a production of *Carousel* as it was presented at the Majestic Theatre in New York City five years ago. The principals are with few exceptions new, the chorus entirely British and the production has been restaged by Jerome Whyte presumably after the direction of Reuben Mamoulian the original director. Thus, the interpretation is altered. The ingredients which time alone have not altered are Richard Rodgers' tuneful score, Oscar Hammerstein's pungent lyrics and the cleverly conceived dances by Agnes de Mille.

De Mille's suitability as a choreographer for musicals of this type stands as an ever present challenge to competitors. Her dances are always appropriate, economical and clearly defined; a continuation of the play's action and never isolated units. Perfect illustrations are the June Dance and the Hornpipe both in the second scene of the first act and the ballet in the fourth scene of the second act.

Of the principal dancers Bambi Linn and Robert Pageant again dance the roles they created. The June Girl, formerly danced by a Martha Graham dancer, Pearl Lang (at present appearing with the Graham company at the Piccadilly Theatre), is now danced by Mavis Ray. The Hornpipe originally designed for Annabelle Lyon former ballerina of Ballet Theatre and Peter Birch is now danced by Jane Evans and Robert Pageant.

The June Dance is an essay in lyricism, vibrant and expressive of languid summer days. It is beautifully danced by Mavis Ray and the *corps de ballet*.

The Hornpipe danced by Jane Evans, Robert Pageant and the *corps de ballet* is mainly traditional. A swaying movement repeated throughout the choreography of this dance conveys the perpetual rocking motion of the sea. A note of original comedy is injected when diminutive Jane Evans symbolising a row boat courageously steers her craft dangerously close to a man-size ship, Robert Pageant, who towers over her. They dance a jaunty Hornpipe *pas de deux* and are eventually joined by the *corps de ballet* for a brisk finale. The music is a reprise of the tune *Blow High, Blow Low*.

The ballet in the fourth scene of the second act, which serves as an introduction for Bambi Linn, is dramatic and theatrically effective.

The theme is based on the complexities of adolescence and the incidental dances are spirited, concise and well constructed. Her use of modern dance technique, bare feet and free torso, are particularly suitable here.

Although Bambi Linn's exaggerated use of make-up destroys to some extent the illusion of a fifteen year old girl, her authority and fine technique compensate for this minor inconsistency.

Jane Evans as the precocious Younger Miss Snow and Mavis Ray as a vulgar Carnival Woman are outstanding. **Jay Price**

Decor

IN his life, Christian Bérard was a modest man and not even his closest friends knew the full range of his artistic output. Therefore it is not altogether surprising that only now, eighteen months after his death, should a number of his works be collected under one roof and his amazing versatility revealed.

Lily and Baird Hastings, who made the collection, and the Arts Council, who brought it to England, are to be congratulated. The Exhibition at the New Burlington Galleries was quiet, too quiet perhaps for those who expected a spectacular display, but this very factor shows the inated good taste which Bérard had above all other French artists and it was fitting that a memorial exhibition should be in this vein.

As we are only concerned here with his designs for the ballet, it is not the place to dwell on the number of wonderful paintings and drawings except to marvel at how so much inspiration and genius could be allotted to one man.

Out of the dozen or so ballets that he was known to have designed (there were many more which never bore his name) only three were shown. The first two, *Cotillon* (1933 for De Basil) and *Mozartiana* (for Ballets 1933) show his formative period. The third, *Les Forains*, his post-war period.

In the sketch for *Cotillon* we see certain trends that later became almost a trade-mark in all his work for the theatre—extreme simplicity, a certain symmetry, the use of brilliant red, and the use of chalky white. When this ballet was first seen at the Alhambra (now alas a hideous cinema) the décor caused as much of a stir as the first Bakst décors must have done, when the Diaghilev Company came to Western Europe. It did, in fact, set the seal on trends in theatre design for the next seventeen years.

Mozartiana was a study in classical simplicity which Bérard later developed mainly in his work for the straight theatre, though it was noticeable in his designs for Massine's *Symphonie Fantastique* (Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo, 1936).

The two designs from *Les Forains* show the costumes for the strolling players that became beloved by all who saw them. This ballet, created in 1945, was the first to use beautifully designed rags, a trend that later became almost synonymous with French ballet companies.

Also in the exhibition are ten gouache of London, done while Bérard was recovering from an illness in a hospital in the Waterloo Road. They are visions of a great city, behind slums and suburban houses rise noble and fantastic structures like something seen in a mirage. A Valhalla seen through the eyes of a man who even then must have been dying and a moving tribute from a great Frenchman.

P. W.

Music . . . . . by EVAN SENIOR

STRAVINSKY—Firebird to Orpheus—

Thirty years ago this year, Europe was startled by the appearance of Stravinsky's first ballet, Firebird. *It was this music which, so to speak, put him on the world map, and from then onwards, as "the bad boy of European music", he kept up the reputation.*

LOOKING back at all the riot of 1913, when the opening of *The Rite of Spring* caused an uproar in the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées in Paris, one wonders what all the fuss was about.

During the season of the New York City Ballet at Covent Garden we shall have the opportunity to see—and hear— for ourselves; for *Firebird*, sensation of 1910 in music, is set side by side with *Orpheus*, Stravinsky's latest ballet score.

In the years between, Stravinsky has passed through many phases. The flashing colours, the involved pattern of music, the brilliance and glitter and clash, have been left behind. The Stravinsky of today, still an experimenter and an innovator, has progressed to what could almost be called an austere and detached classicism.

I heard the music of *Orpheus* when it was first performed in England at one of the B.B.C. Wednesday night concerts in the Albert Hall in February, 1949. I found it a perfect example of the Stravinsky of today, and I for one fell in love with this music. It has a calmness and a clarity which catch you immediately and hold you enfolded in a quiet beauty of smooth-flowing sound.

It is a scoring as clear as glass, limpid and soft and seductive. Putting it side by side with the story—and I have not seen the ballet at the moment of writing—it is almost as if the composer had seen the tale of the love and parting of Orpheus and Eurydice through the mists of a dream. There is not one point where the music becomes even moderately loud.

Once more, as in the case of Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloë*, it is as if the music were describing, not the hot and passionate Mediterranean classicism of legend, but the cooler colours and idealised classicism of the French landscape painters of the eighteenth century. But Ravel's calmness is a tornado compared with this celestial scoring of Stravinsky's latest ballet music.

This is not to decry *Firebird* as music. In fact, in my opinion, *Firebird* is more important as music than as ballet. Different as *Orpheus* and *Firebird* may appear as music, they are two sides of the same coin. Both are work of a master musician, an experimenter and a thinker, a man who can bend sound to his purposes with the magic of an artist and the cunning of a consummate craftsman.

What *Orpheus* will be like as a complete ballet I do not know at this moment of writing. But if Balanchine has felt and understood this music as thoroughly as he has every other musical score in my experience of his work, *Orpheus* may well prove a masterpiece. Musically, it is a delight.

BALLET AT THE PROMS—

Ballet enthusiasts with evenings to spare between actual performances in August and September will find echoes of ballet at the Albert Hall. This year the Proms will include more ballet music than ever before.

BALLET music at concerts is not always exactly the same thing as the music heard from the orchestra pits of the theatres. Free from the demands of dancers, conductors can treat it solely as music.

Some of the music was originally written for ballet. But much of this is music in its own right, and can really be heard at its best, as music, in the concert hall. Trimmed of the necessary padding and detail, quite often it emerges stronger and better in the form of concert music.

Music of another type, originally written for its own sake and later drawn into the ballet repertoire, will also be played. If you have been accustomed to hearing it only as "accompaniment" for ballet, it might be a good idea to take this opportunity of hearing it as it really should be heard.

Probably the most interesting performance, to balletgoers of the post-war generation, will be the first concert performance of Constant Lambert's arrangement of the Purcell music used in Helpmann's *Comus*.

There will also be a full performance of the lovely Delius *Paris* Nocturne, known to the ballet world because of its use by Ashton in *Nocturne*. Prokofieff's own concert suite from the *Cinderella* ballet music is to be played, and the Elegy and Waltz from Tschaikowsky's *Serenade for Strings* (used by Balanchine in the current *Serenade*) will also be heard.

Here, for the benefit of interested ballet enthusiasts, are the dates and items:

August

1 B.B.C. Orchestra (Sir Malcolm Sargent)—*Paris Nocturne* (Delius).

5 B.B.C. Opera Orchestra (Stanford Robinson)—*Cinderella Suite* (Prokofieff), *The Sleeping Beauty* Suite (Tschaikowsky).

7 London Symphony Orchestra (Basil Cameron)—Elegy and Waltz, *Serenade for Strings* (Tschaikowsky), *Swan Lake* Suite (Tschaikowsky).

8 London Symphony Orchestra (Basil Cameron)—Concerto for Two Violins and Orchestra (Bach) (music for Balanchine's *Concerto Barocco*), *Comus* Suite (Purcell-Lambert).

10 B.B.C. Orchestra (Sir Malcolm Sargent)—*The Perfect Fool* Ballet Music (Holst).

12 B.B.C. Orchestra (Sir Malcolm Sargent)—*Capriccio Espagnole* (Rimsky-Korsakov)

16 London Symphony Orchestra (Basil Cameron)—*The Firebird* Suite (Stravinsky).

17 B.B.C. Orchestra (Sir Malcolm Sargent)—*Till Eulenspiegel* (Strauss).

19 B.B.C. Opera Orchestra (Stanford Robinson)—*Façade* Suite (Walton), Five Dances from *Checkmate* (Bliss).

21 B.B.C. Orchestra (Sir Malcolm Sargent)—*The Sleeping Beauty* Waltz (Tschaikowsky), Piano Concerto No. 2 in G (Tschaikowsky) (music of *Ballet Imperial*).

22 B.B.C. Orchestra (Sir Malcolm Sargent)—*La Boutique Fantasque* (Rossini-Respighi), *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* (Rachmaninoff), *La Valse* (Ravel).

23 B.B.C. Orchestra (Sir Malcolm Sargent)—*Mars* and *Jupiter* from *The Planets* (Holst).

24 London Philharmonic Orchestra (Basil Cameron)—*Francesca da Rimini* (Tschaikowsky).

26 London Philharmonic Orchestra (Basil Cameron)—*Don Juan* (Strauss), *Bolero* (Ravel).

29 B.B.C. Orchestra (Sir Malcolm Sargent)—Three Dances from *The Three-Cornered Hat* (Falla).

31 London Philharmonic Orchestra (Basil Cameron)—*Symphonie Fantastique* (Berlioz).

September

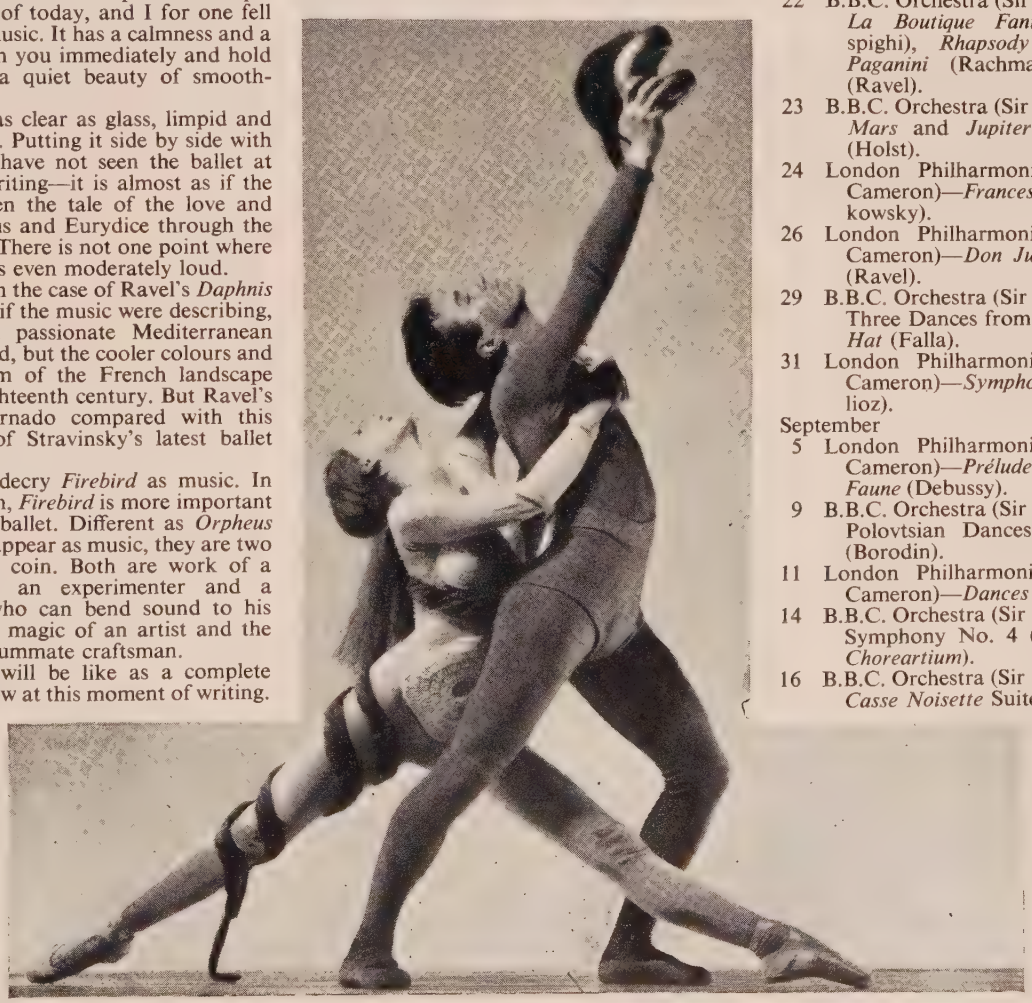
5 London Philharmonic Orchestra (Basil Cameron)—*Prélude à l'Après-Midi d'Un Faune* (Debussy).

9 B.B.C. Orchestra (Sir Malcolm Sargent)—Polovtsian Dances from *Prince Igor* (Borodin).

11 London Philharmonic Orchestra (Basil Cameron)—*Dances of Galanta* (Kodaly).

14 B.B.C. Orchestra (Sir Malcolm Sargent)—Symphony No. 4 (Brahms) (music of *Choreartium*).

16 B.B.C. Orchestra (Sir Malcolm Sargent)—*Casse Noisette* Suite (Tschaikowsky).



Tanaquil LeClerq and Nicholas Magallanes in the Stravinsky - Balanchine Orpheus, *which New York City Ballet are now giving at Covent Garden*

"I'm old, Father Williams"

Battleship Brahms fires a few salvos at those who attacked her in our July issue. This battle royal started in our May issue when Caryl Brahms announced her discontent with the divine.

"'I am old, Father Williams,' the Battleship said" :

Useless to deny that, with Banquo, I feel that "the best is yet behind". And this is in the main because I fully agree with your belligerent correspondent, Mr. Clive Barnes, when he says that the pre-eminence of stars over choreographers is "a disquieting trend". But here acquiescence ends.

I do not agree, for instance, that with *Adam Zero* just behind us, and with the Ballet Rambert rampant (not to mention the much-regretted Metropolitan Ballet whose settled policy it was to give the new choreographer his stage) that our Ballet lacks experiment.

Nor do I agree that the Ballet is healthier now than it was in 1938—indeed, if no new first-ranking choreographers can be found, no more adequate line of male dancers founded, and no more Fonteyns, pulled out of the Conjuror's sleeve, the Ballet is going to suffer a decline in public favour in this country similar to that which the Opera suffered for so long here.

I can assure Mr. Barnes that in the Twenties the normal ballet-goer went to the Diaghilev Ballet not so much to see any one star, as to see the ballet in which it so happened that the star was appearing—a very different order of interest from that which he will find here and now.

But then, the Diaghilev Ballet was founded on magnificent scores (see *Petrouchka, Oiseau de Feu, Tricorne*) and decorated by designers who created new trends with their décors. It contrived to be both the appropriate comment on and the epitaph of its times. I know that I shall not see its stylish like again—least of all in those sad revivals of ballets half-remembered, misunderstood, unsubtly lit, which is all that Mr. Barnes can know of a fabulous repertory.

I note with great dismay that Mr. Barnes has never enjoyed a ballet by Fokine, though I do not greatly wonder at this, since he states that his ballet going began in the blitz, and therefore is something lacking balletic background. Therefore, discussing the Ballet with Mr. Barnes must be rather like discussing Music with one who is not prepared to admit the existence of Mozart, or stubbornly maintains that Music began with Mendelsohn. Yet in admitting that Fonteyn will form his yard-stick for the future (and in her he has chosen a brilliantly accomplished measure) he has admitted the need of experience in the pursuit of comparisons.

I note with further concern that from an eyrie in the gallery he put forward, in your last issue, a singular suggestion while commenting on *Ballabille*.

"The décor, by Clavé, is pretty, but might it not have been cheaper to have used up the décors and costumes (sic) from *Les Sirenes*?"

I need hardly point out that it is but a step from this unfortunate premise to the conclusion that it would have been cheaper if the audience had stayed at home. This will put an end to all Ballet-giving and Ballet-taking.

"'I am old, Father Williams'" and bear rancour against none, so I hope that it is only his lack of background that causes your Mr. Barnes to dispose so sweepingly of the contribution of the designer to the Ballet, and of the line, the lyricism, and the supreme simplicity of the choreography of Fokine. His same lack is the reason that he prefers to see Markova and Dolin in their popular programmes than in those performances when they were nobly framed by the grandeur of The Garden. As it happens Markova and Dolin are about to embark on a middle course, which for once, is probably the best course, and as I write they are forming a larger company, capable of giving the great classical ballets in their blessed entirety. So Mr. Barnes had better get his full battery of yard-sticks ready, for he will find plenty of opportunity for exercising them here.

"'I am old, Father Williams'" the Battleship said" : of course Angletomane is quite right (even though he misquotes me in the process of proving it) when he supposes that my comments on a performance of the Diaghilev Ballet, were I to see it without knowing what company was performing, would be "harsh"—but only provided that by harsh he means astringent and should the presentation I had witnessed fall below certain standards of creation, interpretation and presentation which my superior years of ballet-going have given me.

"I may be old, Father Williams, but not so old as our two belligerents make me feel when they babble that my views on the Ballet are not necessarily universal—is it really necessary for me to point out that they are not for that reason, necessarily wrong?"

Curtain Up!

The singing in *Carousel* is either so good that it carries from Drury Lane to Covent Garden or else some of the singers from the Lane turned up at the wrong theatre for a Saturday matinee. Whatever the reason it certainly sounded strange to hear the hit number, *June is bustin' out all over*, ringing out gaily over the Queen's entrance music in Act I of *Swan Lake*.

★

The reaction of an audience to any artist is always interesting. In the interval during the recent appearance of TOUMANOVA with the Paris Opera Ballet at Florence the following remarks were heard:

"She was so exciting" (French).

"She is so funny I could watch her all the evening" (American).

"Only when I see Fonteyn do I have any respect for a dancer" (Dutch).

". . . just like the Cirque Medrano" (French).

"She does not point her left foot" (English dancing teacher).

"Doesn't she carry on" (English).

★

That French is the language of the ballet is not always recognised by the new ballet public. One day two housewives were reading the programme poster of the Sadler's Wells Ballet: "Look they're doing *Giselle, Les Sylphides, Coppelia, Lac des Cygnes*—oh! what a pity, they are not doing *Swan Lake*."

★

Overheard at Picasso's studio in Valluris on the *Côte d'Azur:*

Spellbound onlooker: "Qu'est ce que ca représent? (What does that represent?) quizically pointing to two freshly painted strokes on a blank canvas.

Picasso: Ca représent deux mille francs, Madame. (This represents two thousand francs, Madam.)

★

Miss Caryl Brahms
Said, "Pray have no qualms,
Though I am growing old
There's *much* more to be told."

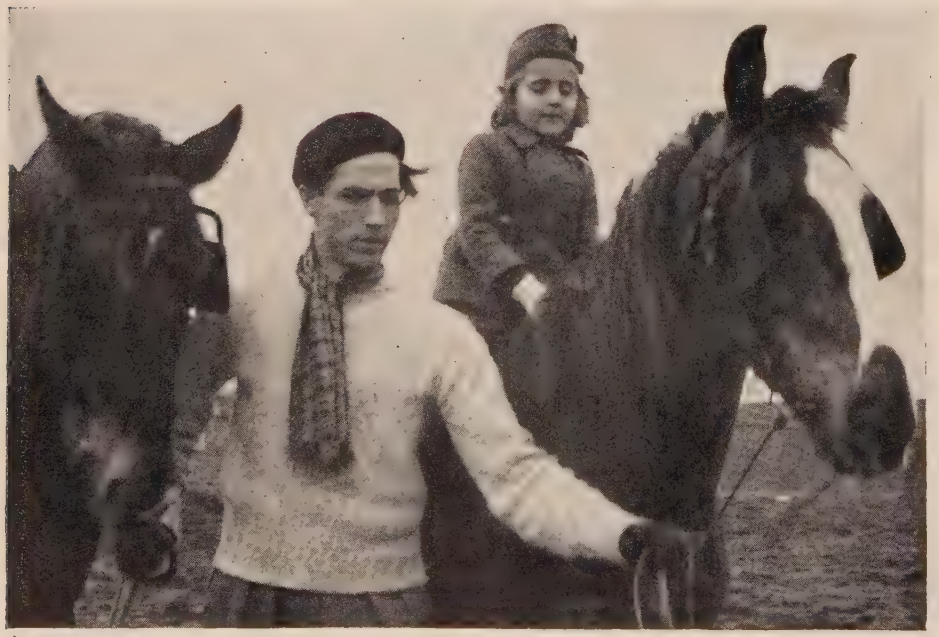


Photo (left) of Frank Shaufuss, one of the principal dancers of the Royal Danish Ballet. Frank has bought a farm and between classes, rehearsals and performances he goes to milk the cows, plough the fields or feed the animals. Here he is seen with his small daughter and two horses. The latter are named after famous dancers and we will leave it to readers to guess what they are called. There are no prizes offered for the correct answer

Dancers you should know . . .

SOUTH AFRICA not only supplies Britain with a steady flow of much needed raw materials but has also managed to turn out some good male dancers. Notable exports in the past have been Alexis Rassine of the Sadler's Wells Ballet and David Poole of Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet; latest contribution is Luis Godfrey currently soloist in the Markova-Dolin company.

Godfrey who hails from Johannesburg is not quite twenty. About medium height, he has brown wavy hair, cut too short at the back, big pondering brown eyes and a small sensitive mouth. He rarely smiles and exudes a kind of brooding melancholia somehow reminiscent of Spain. Although it is difficult to imagine what serious troubles a young man of nineteen could have.

Schooled in most forms of the dance including Spanish and Greek he displays a decided aptitude for Spanish work. His first professional engagement was with the touring company of *Oklahoma* which came to Johannesburg in December of 1948. He was engaged by Erik Kristen of that company for a three months' season there and a subsequent tour of South Africa.

It was during the Johannesburg season that Anton Dolin, who with the Markova-Dolin troupe was fulfilling an engagement there, saw him and after a private audition offered him a job in his company. At the conclusion of his contract with *Oklahoma* he joined the Markova-Dolin company for a short season from September to December, 1949. The new tour was to begin in March, 1950. In the interval he went to the Sadler's Wells School where he was invited by Ninette de Valois to study for a period of six months. While there he danced in the opera *Carmen* and in the ballets *Sleeping Princess* and *Cinderella* at Covent Garden.

Lacking the height generally required of a *premier danseur classique*, Godfrey nevertheless promises to become a fine classical dancer. His skill as a character dancer has already been shown by his lively, clean-cut interpretation of the Bouffant in *Casse Noisette* and by his crisp *Zapateado* in Ana Ricarda's *Fiesta*, a ballet created for the Markova-Dolin company, in which he dances the principal role of the Flower Seller.

His ambition is to be a great dancer and to make his family proud of him. Mr. Louis Godfrey, his father, manages a carpet concern in Johannesburg and is the Chairman of the Johannesburg Ballet Society.

He and Mrs. Godfrey follow Luis' progress with the intense interest of devoted parents. Luis feels fortunate now in the opportunity of working with Anton Dolin from whom he has learned invaluable lessons in partnering and stage deportment.

When he is not busy rehearsing or taking classes Luis likes to relax by indulging in his favourite sports, swimming and tennis.

LUIS GODFREY

(*Photo: Denis de Marney*)

Speak Up!

T.V. Answers Back

SIR.—I have read your review of the television dance-drama *The Eve of St. Agnes*.

I do not wish to quarrel with your criticism, but I feel you are tackling the subject without realising how much is involved.

While agreeing that the possibilities have not yet been fully realised, I would point out that television has only recently embarked on this new field, and that we shall more nearly approach the ultimate when the choreographer becomes an expert in production technique, or when the producer has assimilated enough knowledge of choreography to suit his purpose. I know that much development will have to take place before this comes about. For the ideal screen story there must be a new approach, not necessarily a balletic one.

The Eve of St. Agnes was a compromise between ballet, adjusted for the screen, and camera movement, designed for the cameras, to be viewed on the television screen. The pattern and grouping was not always designed to be a pattern; on some occasions the grouping was arranged to allow the cameras freedom of movement within the group. Much of the general action was devised so that the camera could move through it to the next point of interest. Cameras were not so under-rehearsed as to miss the *intended* movement. Through a camera fault, one important link in the story—the surprise meeting between Porphyro and Angela—was lost. Regretably, this caused quite a lapse in the sequence of the story.

I feel that you have regarded it as a ballet to be televised rather than an original conception through the television medium, which, undoubtedly, it was.

There is one thing certain—a new art form will not materialise until the creators fully understand camera technique and can divorce their minds entirely from theatre convention. What is needed is a completely new approach to the problem.—CHRISTIAN SIMPSON, *Alexandra Palace, Wood Green, London, N.22.*

That Orchestra Again.

SIR.—During a recent visit to Covent Garden I was horrified, during the performance of *Les Sylphides* by the orchestral arrangement of the Chopin music. On looking through early programmes of the Sadler's Wells' production of this ballet I discovered the name of the orchestrator—Gordon Jacob—to be the same as in this particular instance. I was therefore forced to the conclusion that the orchestra itself was at fault.

One is used to occasional deviations in *tempi* to suit different dancers, but never before have the kitchen department and brass been given such free rein. The whole ballet was completely ruined by drum rolls, clashing cymbals and the like, emphasising the beats. However, perhaps owing to lack of rehearsals they were "warming-up" to the next ballet on the programme—*Ballabile* to music by Chabrier!—ELIZABETH MOORE, 43, *Squirrels Heath Avenue, Gidea Park, Essex.*

Our Dreadful Covers

SIR.—With reference to last month's colour cover of Rosario and Antonio, it was very good. All the other months, were pretty ghastly. Mr. Wood has the rare knack of choosing just the right moment at which to take his pictures, the depth and liveliness of his cover was a welcome surprise. No nightmare green backgrounds for him. Unhappily Mr. Byrne does not appear to share this gift. His dancers are too obviously posed. His colouring is for the most part crude. It fails to be an integral part of his compositions. Also he has no great mastery of lighting. It seems so necessary to imbue photographs with vitality, and Mr. Byrne has not so far accomplished this, whatever his reputation for obtaining "scoops". This ability of his is most suitable to a daily newspaper, but surely we are entitled to expect something better from a monthly magazine devoted to one of the major arts? I can only view the cover "Firebird" with trepidation, especially after some of the lovely photographs we have seen by George Platt Lynes. Hence this tirade.—J. HONNEST-REDLICH, 52, *Rosemont Road, Richmond, Surrey.*

Natural Movers Forward!

SIR.—In the various journals dealing with the Dance, published in this country, I have failed to discover any reference to the work of Ted Shawn. I have read his book, *Dance We Must*, and I have been deeply impressed by his work, because, being interested in physical education and all branches of Art, I discovered in this book something which I think is of great significance. There appears, however, to be no attempt to perpetuate his ideals in this country, and I would very much like to try to find out if there are any people over here who are working on his ideas—or at least along the same lines.

I hope to discover people like myself who lean rather to natural movement than to the usual forms of the Dance.—G. T. WHITESIDE, 95, *Gunnersbury Avenue, Ealing, W.5.*

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Dance and Dancers . . . . AT HOME

THE SADLER'S WELLS BALLET finished their season at Covent Garden on July 8. On June 20, *Dante Sonata* returned to the repertoire, and two old friends again took their place in *Facade*.

The new edition of *Facade* includes two of the interpolated numbers which had been dropped since the company opened at Covent Garden. The Country Dance never did set the Thames on fire, but it is well performed, particularly by Alfred Rodrigues as the Squire. The Foxtrot is quite possibly the nadir of Ashton's choreographic invention. What a pity they didn't resuscitate the Nocturne Peruvienne instead. Grant is an interesting Dago. In place of the indolent, spiv-flamboyance most interpreters give to the part, he plays it with a burlesqued animal grace and virility. Certainly a Dago who conceivably could fascinate even a quite sophisticated debutante.

It is right that Ashton's *Dante Sonata* should be in the repertoire and it has revived very well. The cast was considerably strengthened by the reappearance of June Brae as the leading Child of Dark. In a notable portrayal she brings out the very spirit of malevolence. Fonteyn, May, Helpmann and Somes are all excellent in their usual roles. A defect of the choreography is a sometimes uninteresting symmetry, but as a whole it possesses fine invention, flow and vitality. The lighting for this ballet requires immediate attention.

C. B.

The provincial tour of the SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE BALLET has been notable for interesting changes of cast. Nadia Nerina returned from the Senior Company and danced the leading roles in *Swan Lake*, *Les Sylphides*, *Casse Noisette* and *Selina*. Her sure technique, charm and perfect placing made her the ideal Sugar Plum Fairy and in *Selina* she danced with a delightful combination of demureness and mischief.

Svetlana Beriosova danced the three classics in which she had previously appeared with the Metropolitan Ballet and several new roles. As the chief Naiad in *Selina* she pointed all the humorous moments brilliantly and made such a shattering entrance as the Vamp in *Summer Interlude* that both audience and dancers staggered visibly. She has also been seen in *Beauty and the Beast* which suits her less perfectly than it does Patricia Miller for whom it was created.

Among the other first performances, David Poole has danced the Prince in *Casse Noisette*—a type of role not really his forte. He also made his debut as the *Facade* Dago at Finsbury Park. Peter Wright was attractive, if not very convincingly Spanish, in the lead of *El Destino* and Joan Cadzow startlingly beautiful as the Fortune-teller in the same ballet. Maureen Bruce has taken Patricia Miller's part in *Summer Interlude* and Kathleen Gorham has shown gaiety in the *Giselle pas de deux* and *Trisch-Trasch*.

Pauline Harrop, in her first solo role, danced the best *Sylphides* Waltz for a long time. She both can and does jump and is soon to appear as Selina should suit her gaiety and lightness perfectly. Donald McAlpine danced Bouffon in *Casse Noisette* and Maurice Metliss replaced him in the *Danse Chinois*, both very successfully.

John Cranko, now resident choreographer, was very amusing in his own *Trisch-Trasch* and also in *El Destino*. He has been working out on the Company the ballet to Schubert's Fantasia which he has been commissioned to choreograph for the New York City Ballet.

C. H.

Julian Braunsweg's BALLET ROYALE with Anton Dolin as Artistic Director and principal dancer, opens at the Kings Theatre, Southsea, on August 14. After a tour of about six weeks, the company will come to London for a long autumn season. As well as Dolin, the company will include Krassovska, possibly Elvin, John Gilpin and a number of well-known dancers. The *corps de ballet* will be the same as that used for the recent Markova-Dolin tour. Markova will join the company when she has completely recovered from her recent operation. The repertoire will consist of famous classics, revivals of *Petrouchka* and *Beau Danube* and many new works by young choreographers.

On May 30, NOBLE PAULICKPULLE gave a recital of the Dances of Ceylon at King George's Hall.

She failed to impress mainly because of bad presentation. Not only was the programme lacking in variety, but the stageing was shoddy —poor lighting and a few uninteresting drapes for scenery, a bad setting for the costumes, which were very beautiful. A single prop, in the hands of someone like Ram Gopal, experienced in Western Theatre as he is, can do everything for a stage in this type of programme.

The dances of Ceylon and India appear to be very similar. Whether due to the difference between the two, or to the performer, I could not tell, but most of the dances seemed vague and repetitive compared with the performances of Indian dancers we have seen. The choreography for all dances appears to be by Paulickpulle, based (according to the programme) on different techniques, though the differences were scarcely discernible.

On the same programme Sinhalese songs were sung with spirit (to the accompaniment of authentic types of ancient instruments) by Surya Sena. Their similarity to Spanish and Portuguese songs is enough to drive one immediately to a textbook of anthropology.

The most impressive thing about JUANA'S season at the Fortune (June 5 to 10) was the fine presentation. One has seen such performances fail from the outset because of shoddy lighting and makeshift stage dressing. Here, however, fine and imaginative costumes, well lit against a plain background of black drapes, proved both satisfying and effective.

The performance was a virtuoso feat of mood-changing; each dance had the flavour of authenticity unspoiled by any obtrusive personal interpretation. She seemed at her best in the Spanish and Middle Eastern dances.

ANGELO ANDES and CONSUELO CARMONA gave a two weeks' season at the tiny Watergate Theatre from June 12 to June 24. They danced before a not unattractive background of black curtains and draped fishing nets, often effectively lit. The music, provided by a single piano, was played adequately but without distinction. The costumes, especially Carmona's, were very fine, and their detail was one compensation for the third of the audience who had to sit too close to the stage.

Carmona danced the stately *Seguidillas* and *Sevillanas* well, but seemed to give too quiet and genteel an interpretation of dances of *Flamenco* character. The speed and modulation of Andes' *zapateado*, despite unsympathetic acoustics, were a joy to watch and hear, as also was his guitar playing. At times, however, his interpretation and communication of style seemed too large and overdrawn for so small and intimate a theatre. Altogether I found the *jotas* most enjoyable, and especially the exciting one performed with tambourines.

M. A.

Pamela May, Michael Somes and Margot Fonteyn as the Children of Light in the recent revival of Ashton's Dante Sonata
(*Photo: Felix Fonteyn*)

Dance and Dancers . . . . ABROAD

FRANCE

It is not easy to conquer Paris. Ruth Page and José Limon now know what it means, and even Marie Rambert, who had a certain success, counted the spectators at the Sarah-Bernhardt theatre every evening.

LES BALLETS AMERICAINS do not exist in America. It is an exportation title for Paris. José Limon who is billed as "The greatest male dancer in the American dance", comes straight from the German expressionism school with its bad taste, heaviness, and its social and moral ambitions. He has a sensual lyricism with an understanding of the rhythm and melody of the muscle, which belongs to the "gunther" school of Munich. In both his *Pavane du Maure* (a too long variation on the Othello theme) and especially in *Malinche* (in which he personifies the Indian people), one cannot help thinking of Mary Wigman and Kurt Jooss. All this realism in the dance represents a period that has now vanished. It is more an art of movement than of choreography. I feel that it fails in its most important point—the poetry. Dancing has no worse enemy than the realism in which the German school wallows.

As for Ruth Page, she was the first dancer in Chicago in 1924 and she was for two years at New York's Metropolitan Opera House. Today she would be no credit to any provincial ballet company.

I know that tastes are different from one continent to another and that we must not judge foreign aesthetics by ours so that I tried to judge the American ballet as impartially as possible. But there is no escaping reality and one wonders whether they went out of their way to show Paris such ugly costumes. Those for *Variations sur Euclide* and for *An American in Paris* were more absurd than anything one could imagine. It is impossible to excuse failure in such an easy evocation of Gershwin's famous music and to interpret it with such an awful performance of bad music-hall.

The only ballet I liked, even with its rather heavy humour, was the celebrated *Frankie and Johnnie*, a burlesque melodrama so typical of the style of modern American ballet. The choreography by Ruth Page and Bentley Stone was not understood by Paris; it was applauded by some and whistled by others. This ballet is a choreographic parody of the drama of jealousy with its prostitutes and sexy girls' circle. Some of the gags are very good. Three Salvation Army girls drink glasses of beer while bending over the coffin with two Lesbians beside them. It is amusing and eccentric but not in very good taste.

★

BALLET RAMBERT was well received in Paris. Their youth, simplicity, and modesty are a good point. Their simple technique was hidden by expression, a thing rare enough in English ballet. It was all charming and unpretentious. Apart from Sally Gilmour, there were no stars. The choreography of Walter Gore and Andrée Howard was honest but no more. Gore's *Plaisance*, to Rossini music, would seem to require more technical dancers. *Lady into Fox* was not appreciated in Paris. The Honneger music was badly orchestrated and it had to be played on a piano during their second week. In spite of Sally Gilmour's personality as the Fox, the ballet seemed far too long and without originality. On the same theme, Roland Petit's *Les Demoiselles de la Nuit* has more poetry and choreographic invention.

The second half of the programme, with its special type of humour, conquered the hesitating audience. Tudor's *Judgement of Paris*, the evocation of three dancers in a brothel trying by turns to seduce the idle customer with suggestive dances, was well liked by the French audience. Kurt Weill's score, originally written for *L'Opera de quatre sous* (The Beggar's Opera), played on a roaring piano is most suitable for this parody. Equally popular was Tudor's *Gala Performance*. The rivalry between the three ballerinas from Moscow, Milan and Paris is charming for its grace and spirit but it is a pity that Tudor has not parodied an English ballerina. Margaret Hill, Paula Hinton and Sally Gilmour (irresistably coquettish and simpering as the French ballerina) deserve only praise as also David Paltenghi who partnered so skilfully.

But the great triumph of the evening was Madame Rambert herself; she disappeared under a mass of flowers, jumped with a light foot over baskets of blooms while thanking and blowing kisses to the public. It was the apotheosis of the Gala Performance.

Jean Laurent

★

George Skibine, of the de Cuevas company, looking at the model for his Tragédie a Vérone. *The designer André Delfau is standing next to Skibine. This ballet has been the hit of the recent tour (Photo: W. Oukhtomsky)*

After all their troubles, LES BALLETS DES CHAMPS-ELYSÉES have been saved. Eight days before their proposed departure for Australia and North America, which would mean that they would be away from France for eighteen months, Jean Babilée refused to go. This meant that all the contracts had to be broken, the company collapsed, and Director Roger Eudes found that he was unable to continue to finance the company. However, owing to Les Artistes Associés de la Danse it was made possible to continue and with the further help of Yvette Chauviré a season was opened at the Theatre des Champs-Elysées after ten days. The company consisted of Igor Fosca, Jean Guelis, Hélène Traline and Guy Lainé, with, of course, Yvette Chauviré who was partnered by Skouratoff. The repertoire consisted of several of the usual Champs-Elysées ballets (*La Rencontre*, *Les Forains*, *Le Bal des Blanchisseuses*, *Jeu de Cartes* and *La Nuit*) together with *Suite Romantique* with choreography by Chauviré to Chopin music, *Ecuyère* with choreography by Lifar to Kosma music, and a new ballet by Gsovksy to Mozart music called *Nocturne* which had costumes by Pierre Balmain.

After this successful season which lasted from June 13 to 24 and helped to make up for some of the disasters, the company left for a tour of Palestine, after that they go to Scandinavia and later in the autumn to Germany.

So it has again been proved that companies can continue to flourish without the stars who think themselves indispensable. One can only deplore the fact that such selfishness can cause so much distress; there are no dancers in the world today who are great enough to have the right to put themselves above either their art or their duty to their fellow artists.

★

The company of the MARQUIS DE CUEVAS had a big success during their season in Barcelona. Golovine in the *Black Swan pas de deux* was the big hit of the season. The Dali *Colloque Sentimentale* was laughed off the stage but the Spaniards loved *Petrouchka*. In Madrid they had an artistic success but it was too late in the season to play to full houses. The company are now in Holland.

Ana Ricarda's ballet *Inez de Castro* will be mounted for the Paris season with Rosella Hightower in the title role and André Eglevsky as Pedro.

Babilée and Philippart have now joined the company and will dance in his ballets and *Le Jeune Homme et la Mort*.

June Morris and Nathan Baker have left.

U. S. A.

During April and May BALLET THEATRE celebrated its tenth anniversary with a brilliant spring season at New York's Center Theater. Four new works were given along with some of the repertoire gathered from ten years' activity.

Jeux in a new version by William Dollar was danced with spirit and skill by Igor Youskevitch, Nora Kaye and Norma Vance. The music is the Debussy score made famous by Nijinsky.

Highlight of the season was Herbert Ross' original and clever ballet *Caprichos*, inspired by Goya's etchings and his comments upon them. A first class score, Bela Bartok's "Contrasts", and excitingly effective costumes by Helene Pons combined to convey Ross' choreography in striking style. He has captured the sardonic

touches of the Goya with distinct imagination. The dance, often stylised in idiom, has a close affinity with the Goya etchings. Particularly vivid is the third episode. Here a young man tries to dance back to life his apparently "dead" partner. Ruth Ann Koesun performed this role with utmost skill, assuming only the positions given her by John Kriza, her partner. There was a reality to her performance. *Caprichos* was originally presented by the Choreographers' Workshop in January of this year. It is certainly a fine addition to Ballet Theatre.

Antony Tudor's new ballet *Nimbus* offered a number of new ideas but there was a certain monotony as the piece progressed. The music, the folksy and lush Violin Concerto by Louis Gruenberg, unfortunately grew tiresome. The outstanding feature was Oliver Smith's ingenious setting. Some lovely effects in movement, colour and lighting were obtained to enhance the mood of Tudor's conception. The bright and colourful costumes by Saul Bolasni were a vivid experience to see, especially in the first part. The story concerns a girl, her dream, and an episode on the roof-top of an apartment house where the tenants go to escape the summer heat. There are some delightful touches of humour.

Designs with Strings with choreography by John Taras and décor by Irene Sharaff was the other new work.

Leonard Basham

ITALY

Of the last evening of the Paris Opera Ballet in Florence, our correspondent writes:—

"I left the theatre quite exhausted, feeling as though I had danced the whole programme myself.

The first work was Ravel's *Pavane pour une Infante Défunte* with Lifar choreography. It was flat and undistinguished—the Infante was far from defunct and the *pavane* was a good *mazurka*. Though on the whole it was the least objectionable ballet of the evening.

This was followed by a *Pas de Deux Classique* for Toumanova and Kalioujny to the music of Tchaikovsky and Glazounov. This proved to be quite a *mélange classique—Entrée* and *adage* (music and choreography from the *Casse Noisette pas de deux*); Male solo (music from *Raymonda* Act 3, choreography unknown); Ballerina's solo (*corps de ballet* waltz from Act 3 of *Raymonda*, choreography unknown). Coda (male solo from *Casse Noisette*). Although the programme said that the choreography was by Petipa, it was obvious that not one single step had been taken from him, though from the dancing point of view this *pas de deux* was the high spot of the evening. Kalioujny's *Prince Igor* is a cherished memory but I find him an uninspiring classical dancer. He seems heavy, without fire, and always cursed with costumes that accentuate his lack of neck.

Toumanova has a beauty that is breath-taking, an exotic quality of movement that is really exciting and a more than adequate technique with which she combines the vulgarity of a tart, the exhibitionism of a spoilt child and a lack of taste and self-discipline that would be fatal in any other art form. She poked her head forward, danced right off the music, balanced and grimaced until I felt sick. Yet never-the-less she somehow contrived to be so exciting that I could not refrain from clapping.

This was followed by *Mirages* (Sauguet music, Cassandre décor, and Lifar choreography). A rather long ballet with several ingenious lifts and groups and a scenario quite uncomprehensible in any known language. There were some brilliant technical feats by the entire company headed by Renault and Darsonval.

The less said about *Entre deux Rondes*, which followed, the better. Clavier has a charming soubrette face, long well-placed legs and the promise-of-things-to-come. Lifar danced a solo involving two *pirouettes*, a spear, and much blushing on the part of the audience.

The final ballet, *Divertissement*, reached rock bottom for lack of taste and entertainment value. The terribly mutilated music was originally written by Tchaikovsky. A telescoped and tortured *Sleeping Princess* it ran for one hour and ten minutes without a break.

This is what happened:—Aurora in the shape of Vyroubova, lying in a semi-ruined place, is awakened by Kalioujny to the "panorama" music. They dance the echo of the *grand pas de deux*. Enter five fairies and their cavaliers who dance an *adage*. Fanfare of trumpets (overture Act 3) re-enter Aurora, this time in the form of Darsonval, who dances the Rose Adagio and solo. Dimming down of lights, enter sixteen girls who do *grandes battements* and extremely difficult *manèges* to the waltz music from Act one. Enter Florestan with his two sisters, whose relationship has got rather peculiar—the two sisters are inseparable, he dances their variations and they dance his. Somebody dances the Sugar Plum variation from *Casse Noisette* which is followed by the Three Ivans. The latter proved to be two Ivans and an Olga who has a broader outlook on life than her brothers. They do the inevitable cobbler steps while she does a can-can on point. After this episode, memory dims until the Aurora *pas de deux* danced by Vyroubova and Kalioujny. She danced very well but is too lyrical for such a bravura role, though her solo was danced with sparkle and aristocracy.

During this last ballet I calculated we saw well over 200 *double tour en L'air*, about 1,400 *pirouettes*, 700 *entrechats six* and not a single *enchaînement* that one would ever wish to see again. The standard of technique is far far higher than any company outside Soviet Russia. The men are all brilliant and dance with great attack and zest. The girls can all spin themselves silly and in several cases appear to have already done so, and on the whole they lack charm. But above everything the company lacks a choreographer and artistic direction.

U.S.S.R.

Our correspondent on the way to Moscow, writes:—

I arrived in Leningrad on a Sunday afternoon and after a battle with the customs who wished to take the number of my watch, radio, money and everything else with the ghost of a hallmark, I was driven in state in a huge car to the Astoria Hotel. I was leaving by the Red Arrow for Moscow that night but I managed to get a single ticket for the Marinsky Theatre for the evening.

It really is a wonderful theatre, quite in the old grand manner. There are six tiers all in gold and saxe-blue, and from the painted roof which crowns everything hang enormous and brilliantly-lit chandeliers. I found my seat after a good deal of wandering around.

The stage is bigger than Covent Garden but not much deeper. There is a great air of tradition and I tried to imagine what it was like in the days of Karsavina and Nijinsky.

It was the first night of a new ballet, *Ali Bateehr*, which is the name of an Indian province. The story was of a bird (danced by Sholnov) who leaves her wings in a woodland glade and pretends to be human, she is wooed by a dashing huntsman Prince (Gerbek),

Soviet ballerina Paesetskaya in Black Swan

attacked by a wicked demon, married to the rescuing huntsman, enticed back to the bird kingdom by the demon, finally retrieved for ever by the Prince.

The décor was in the pantomime tradition with groups of swans and demons tearing across the stage, thunderstorm effects, very intricate lighting, and all very distracting from the dancing point of view.

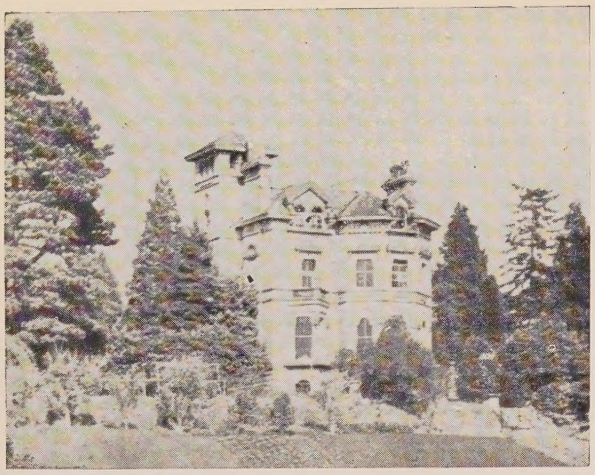
I was not very attracted to the ballerina who had a typical Russian style, almost copyright, but her elevation and speed were spectacular. She was of fair size with an enormous broad back, which was most unbecoming.

The discipline and verve of the *corps de ballet* was amazing. No one stood out specifically from the ranks but they all had an impeccable style that left me gasping. The wedding scene in the second act was one of the most impressive spectacles I have seen on any ballet stage—nearly two hundred dancers in brilliant Eastern costumes were generally making merry in an Indian village, and how they danced!

There was also an interesting solo for the ballerina after the marriage ceremony, she danced under a silken canopy which was made to float around her by a draught of air, thus giving the impression of flight which the bird maiden obviously desired as she was already pining for her original existence.

The male dancer performed a very exhausting trial of strength with twenty other male dancers and this was followed by a thrilling Cossack dance which I now know that only Russians can perform with such *brio*. There was also an enchanting dance by some very young students (boys and girls) of the Ballet School, they gave the impression of being made to dance.

It is rather hard to get a clear picture of this, my first ballet in Soviet Russia, but the general impression was of a wonderful *corps de ballet* and male dancing.



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Ballet Dates

NEW YORK CITY BALLET at COVENT GARDEN

JULY
25 *Jinx, Firebird, Jones Beach.*
26 (Matinee) *Symphonie Concertante, Orpheus, Jones Beach.*
26 (Evening at 8.15) *Jinx, Firebird, Jones Beach.*
27 *Mother Goose Suite, Prodigal Son, Symphony in C.*
28 *Firebird, Prodigal Son, Jones Beach.*
29 (Matinee) *Mother Goose Suite, Prodigal Son, Symphony in C.*
29 (Evening) *Firebird, Prodigal Son, Jones Beach.*
31 *Serenade, The Guests, Bouree Fantasque.*

AUGUST
1 *Serenade, The Guests, Bouree Fantasque.*
2 (Matinee) *Concerto Barocco, Age of Anxiety, Bouree Fantasque.*
2 (Evening) *Concerto Barocco, Age of Anxiety, Bouree Fantasque.*
3 *The Guests, Pas de Deux Romantique, Divertimento, Illuminations.*
4 *Concerto Barocco, Divertimento, Pas de Deux Romantique, Illuminations.*
5 (Matinee) *The Guests, Pas de Deux Romantique, Divertimento, Jones Beach.*
5 (Evening) *Mother Goose Suite, Illuminations, Symphony in C.*
7 *The Guests, Jinx, Symphonie Concertante.*
8 *Prodigal Son, The Duel, Symphonie Concertante.*
9 (Matinee) *Jinx, Serenade, Jones Beach.*
9 (Evening) *The Duel, Age of Anxiety, Symphony in C*
10 *Concerto Barocco, Divertimento, Pas de Deux Romantique, Four Temperaments.*
11 *Symphonie Concertante, Four Temperaments, Jones Beach.*
12 (Matinee) *Serenade, Orpheus, Bouree Fantasque.*
12 (Evening) *The Duel, Divertimento, The Guests, Symphony in C.*

BALLET RAMBERT ON TOUR

JULY
31 The Royal Hall, Harrogate.

AUGUST
7 New Theatre, Hull.
14-26 The Birmingham Repertory Theatre, Birmingham.
28 The Theatre Royal, Bath.

INTERNATIONAL BALLET

JULY 10 to AUGUST 5 Dublin.
AUGUST 7 to 19 The Royal Court, Liverpool.

BALLET ROYALE

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AUGUST
14 Kings Theatre, Southsea.
21 Alhambra, Bradford.
28 Empire, Sheffield.

SEPTEMBER
4 Royal Theatre, Nottingham.
11

MARTHA GRAHAM and COMPANY at the PICCADILLY THEATRE

JULY
25 *Deaths and Entrances, Stephen Acrobat, Every Soul is a Circus.*
26 (Matinee) *Errand into the Maze, Eye of Anguish, Appalachian Spring.*
26 (Evening) *Errand into the Maze, Eye of Anguish, Appalachian Spring.*
27 *Diversion of Angels, Cave of the Heart, Every Soul is a Circus.*
28 *Diversion of Angels, Cave of the Heart, Every Soul is a Circus.*
29 (Matinee) *Herodiade, El Penitente, Letter to the World.*
29 (Evening) *Herodiade, El Penitente, Letter to the World.*
31 *Night Journey, Diversion of Angels, Dark Meadow.*

AUGUST
1 *Night Journey, Diversion of Angels, Dark Meadow.*
2 (Matinee) *Deaths and Entrances, Stephen Acrobat, Every Soul is a Circus.*
2 (Evening) *Deaths and Entrances, Stephen Acrobat, Every Soul is a Circus.*
3 *Errand into the Maze, Eye of Anguish, Appalachian Spring.*
4 *Errand into the Maze, Eye of Anguish, Appalachian Spring.*
5 (Matinee) *Diversion of Angels, Cave of the Heart, Every Soul is a Circus.*
5 (Evening) *Diversion of Angels, Cave of the Heart, Every Soul is a Circus.*

EDINBURGH FESTIVAL

BALLET THEATRE. August 21-26. Empire Theatre.
Theme and Variations, Fall River Legend, Fancy Free.
GRAND BALLET DE MONTE CARLO. August 28-30. Empire Theatre.
Swan Lake (Act II), *Beau Danube, New Ballet*
AUGUST 31-September 2. Empire Theatre.
Giselle (Two Acts), *Petrouchka.*
ROSARIO AND ANTONIO. September 4-9. Empire Theatre.
(There will be no Sunday performances of ballet).

Clubs

LIVERPOOL

Merseyside Ballet Circle (*Sec.: Miss R. V. Mooney, West Vale, Neston, Liverpool*).

Thursday, May 30th, marked the end of the Circle's second season. An impromptu discussion was held on the ballet *Giselle* during which excerpts from the score were played.

In May Mr. Ronald Settle and Mr. John Warner both of the Liverpool Playhouse presented a programme of lesser known ballets. Selections from the scores of these works were played by Mr. Settle with a commentary by Mr. Warner.

The end-of-the-season programme was held at Theatre Hall, Radiant House in Liverpool. A lecture-demonstration on the history and technique of ballet was followed by a series of divertissements by members of the Circle. Local dance teachers aided in arranging the programme by allowing their students to participate.

A summer meeting is being planned and a Junior Section will be added to the Circle next season.

LONDON

London Ballet Circle (*Sec.: Stanley Hawkins, 47 Ashchurch Grove, London, W.*12).

On Sunday, June 18th, Honorary President Ninette de Valois addressed the circle on the Sadler's Wells Company. At the conclusion of the lecture she was presented with a cheque for the Sadler's Wells Benevolent Fund.

Violetta Elvin had recently become a member of the London Ballet Circle and is scheduled to lecture to its members sometime during the 1951 season.

AUSTRALIA

The Melbourne Ballet Guild (*C. Conyn, 73 Darlingpoint Rd., Darlingpoint, Sydney*).

The Melbourne Ballet Guild is headed by former Sadler's Wells dancer Laurel Martyn and specialises in doing chamber ballets. The company is comprised of a nucleus of six dancers and when needed a *corps de ballet* is drawn from the various dance schools.

New works for this season (June-October) are *Vacant Lot*, with choreography by Thelma Henderson and music of Darius Milhaud and *L'Amour Enchanté*, choreography by Laurel Martyn to music by Esther Rofé. Leading dancers are Eve King and Graham Smith.

Rex Reid working out a group at the first rehearsal of his ballet Corroboree, *which had its first performance in Sydney on July* 3 *by the Australian National Theatre Ballet of Melbourne* (*Photo: Ian Hanna*)

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